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S. HRG. 99-162

NOMINATION OF JOHN WILLIAM BODE

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY UNITED STATES SENATE

NINETY-NINTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

ON

THE NOMINATION OF JOHN WILLIAM BODE TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE FOR FOOD AND CONSUMER SERVICES

JUNE 24, 1985

Printed for the use of the
Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry

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NOMINATION OF JOHN WILLIAM BODE

MONDAY, JUNE 24, 1985

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 1:06 p.m., in room 332, Russell Senate Office Building, Hon. Jesse Helms (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Present: Senators Helms, Boren, and Dixon.

STATEMENT OF HON. JESSE HELMS, A U.S. SENATOR FROM NORTH CAROLINA

The CHAIRMAN. The committee will come to order. It is always a pleasure to have John Bode back here where he belongs. The pleasure is enhanced by the presence of Mrs. Bode and—Sean, is it?

Mr. BODE. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. You've got a ham on your hands there—he's a cutie.

Alan, John worked on the staff of the committee for 2 years prior to his appointment as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Food and Consumer Services in 1981. He came to the committee through the recommendation of Senator Boren on whose staff Mr. Bode worked in Oklahoma when Dave Boren was Governor of Oklahoma.

So we congratulate you, John. We'll see if we can't struggle and get your nomination to be Assistant Secretary of Agriculture through the Senate.

It seems to me that at times in the past not enough attention is paid to this aspect of the Department's programs, and with the committee's indulgence I am going to ask unanimous consent that the balance of my statement appear in the record.[1]

I would take note formally that Mrs. Bode—Denise—is in the audience, and Sean is how old, two and a half?

Mr. BODE. Two and a half.

The CHAIRMAN. Two and a half going on 41. [Laughter.]

Since John is an Oklahoman, we will hear from Senator Boren.

[1] See p. 4 for the prepared statement of Senator Helms.

STATEMENT OF HON. DAVID L. BOREN, A U.S. SENATOR FROM OKLAHOMA

Senator BOREN. Well, Mr. Chairman, it is a privilege for me to be a participant in these hearings today, and I am delighted that John Bode has been nominated to be Assistant Secretary. He has, of course, served as the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Food and Consumer Services, as I am sure you have already noted, and has done so, I think, very effectively.

He previously served us on this committee as a member of the staff, I believe by your appointment. I think at that time I was privileged to first introduce you to this young man. He had served on my staff when I was Governor of Oklahoma for a period of time, partly when he was still in school. He also served as a clerk in our district court system in Oklahoma and did an outstanding job.

I would just say that I think we are very fortunate to have someone of John Bode's qualifications and, above all, someone of his integrity, who is willing to stay on in Washington and render a public service.

So I am delighted at this appointment. Needless to say, I am an enthusiastic supporter of it.

Senator DIXON. Mr. Chairman, may I say that I have examined the credentials of Mr. Bode very carefully and they all seem to be in order. And since I don't hold guilt by association against anyone, the association of Mr. Bode with Senator Boren will be overlooked. [Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Nickles asked that his statement, very laudatory of the nominee, be made a part of the record.[1]

John, we will hear from you in just a second—but not quite. I have got to ask you two questions.

If you are confirmed by the Senate, do you promise to respond to requests and to appear and testify before this committee or any other duly constituted committee of the Senate?

Mr. BODE. Yes, sir, I do

The CHAIRMAN. If you are confirmed by the Senate, will you faithfully execute the laws passed by the Congress regardless of any previous statement you may have made or biases you may have had?

Mr. BODE. Yes, sir, I do.

The CHAIRMAN. Very well. Now we will be glad to hear from you, Mr. Bode.

Mr. BODE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have no prepared statement. It's very good to be back at the committee. I appreciate the opportunity to come here, it's been an honor and a pleasure for me to testify before this committee several times in the past, and, of course, it's a great honor to serve the Department in this administration.

I would like to thank you, and Senator Boren especially, for the help and guidance I have received over the past several years in working in various capacities for you. You have always been very good to me and very gracious in all respects, and I appreciate that greatly.

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[1] See p. 4 for the prepared statement of Senator Nickles.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, that's a two-way street, John. You have always been a straight-shooter, you do your homework, you have done an excellent job both here at the committee and down at the Department, and I am sure that will continue to be the case.

Now, then, if we have no further business to come before the committee, I want Sean to come over here and dismiss this committee. [Laughter.]

And I will let you keep your juice. [Laughter.]

All right, now, you hold that and you hit that table hard, OK?

[Whereupon, at 1:12 p.m. the committee adjourned, subject to call of the Chair.]

COMMITTEE NOTE:

June 27, 1985.—The nomination of John Bode was reported to the Senate.
July 17, 1985.—The nominee was confirmed by the Senate.

APPENDIX

Statement of Hon. Jesse Helms, a U.S. Senator From North Carolina

It is always good to have John back before the Committee. John worked on the staff of the Committee for two years prior to his appointment as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Food and Consumer Services in 1981.

John came to the Committee through the recommendations of Senator Boren, on whose staff John worked in Oklahoma when Senator Boren was governor of Oklahoma.

We congratulate you, John, on your forthcoming promotion to Assistant Secretary.

It has seemed to me that at times in the past not enough attention is paid to this aspect of the Department's programs. The food stamp program and the array of child nutrition programs constitute about half of the entire Department of Agriculture budget. As such, they will consume a good deal of John's time and energies in proper oversight. While much has been done during the past four years to improve these programs and bring better management to their operation, much more needs to be done.

John's counsel has been sought by Senators of both parties during our Committee markups, and his presence and knowledge of these programs has contributed markedly to those deliberations. He'll soon be back before us again in that capacity, when we turn to the food stamp portion of the farm bill—probably sometime in mid to late July. (I know that is mixed blessing for all involved.)

At any rate, by all accounts, he has shown great competence and effectiveness in overseeing the Department's extensive food assistance progams in his current position, and I fully anticipate that he will continue in the fine tradition he has established.

Statement of Hon. Don Nickles, a U.S. Senator From Oklahoma

Mr. Chairman, I thank the committee for the opportunity to testify during today's confirmation hearing on the nomination of John W. Bode, a native Oklahoman, for the position of Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Food and Consumer Services. It is my pleasure to express my strong support for his appointment, as I am confident he will carry on the fine tradition Oklahomans have had serving this nation.

In fact, the last four years John has served as Deputy Assistant Secretary for USDA's Food and Consumer Services. In my opinion, John's administrative and technical experience he has gained in the Department uniquely qualifies him for the Assistant Secretary's position.

Additionally, John served on the staff of this committee with responsibility for general USDA budget oversight and matters concerning food assistance programs. I am confident John is committed to obtaining the most from our nutrition and food assistance programs for the taxpayer's dollar.

Mr. Chairman, I urge the committee to act swiftly and favorably upon the nomination of John W. Bode to serve as Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Food and Consumer Services.

Department of Agriculture,
Washington, DC, June 21, 1985.

Hon. Jesse A. Helms,
Chairman, Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

Dear Mr. Chairman: On June 6, 1985, I submitted to the Office of Government Ethics a copy of my SF 278, Financial Disclosure Report, required in connection

with my nomination to serve as Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Food and Consumer Services. That report contained all required financial information for calendar year 1984, and for the current calendar year through June 6, 1985. The Ethics in Government Act of 1978, as amended, also requires that I update certain of the information reported on the SF 278, i.e., that required by section 202(a)(1)(A) of the Act, respecting income (other than dividends, interest, rents, and capital gains) and honoraria, to a date which occurs five days before the date of the hearing held by your Committee to consider my nomination for that position.

The purpose of this letter is to report that, as of June 19, 1985—five days prior to the Committee's hearing scheduled for June 24, 1985—I have received no income or honoraria in addition to those categories and amounts of income shown on my Financial Disclosure Report as dated and filed on June 6, 1985. I trust that this letter therefore satisfies the additional applicable reporting requirements contained in the Ethics in Government Act.

Sincerely,

JOHN W. BODE,
ASSISTANT SECRETARY-DESIGNATE,
Food and Consumer Services.

OFFICE OF GOVERNMENT ETHICS,
Washington, DC, June 19, 1985.

Hon. JESSE A. HELMS,
Chairman, Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: In accordance with the Ethics in Government Act of 1978, I enclose a copy of the financial disclosure report filed by John W. Bode, who has been nominated by President Reagan for the position of Assistant Secretary for Food and Consumer Services, Department of Agriculture.

We have reviewed the report and have also obtained advice from the Department of Agriculture concerning any possible conflict in light of the Department's functions and the nominee's proposed duties. Based thereon, we believe that Mr. Bode is in compliance with applicable laws and regulations governing conflicts of interest.

Sincerely,

DAVID H. MARTIN,
Director.

Enclosure.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
Washington, DC, June 6, 1985.

Hon. DAVID H. MARTIN,
Director, Office of Government Ethics, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. MARTIN: The purpose of this letter is briefly to describe my personal financial interests in order to assure that no actual or apparent conflict of interest will exist in connection with the duties I will perform if confirmed to serve as Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Food and Consumer Services.

I have served since 1981 as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Food and Consumer Services and, in that role, I have assisted in the administration of the food stamp, school lunch, and other feeding programs assigned by law to the Department of Agriculture. During that time, my wife and I have held, and continue to hold, interests in two farm parcels—one, a poultry farm of approximately 4½ acres located near Bentonville, Arkansas, and the second, a farm of approximately 160 acres near Geary, Oklahoma, which is generally used as pasture land. I believe that my partnership interests in these farming operations raise no conflict of interest issues in connection with the duties I will perform as Assistant Secretary for Food and Consumer Services.

I expect to be nominated as well, however, to serve as a member of the Board of Directors of the Commodity Credit Corporation, a corporation within the Department of Agriculture, and therefore to share responsibility for administration of USDA farm lending and price support programs. The farming operations which I have described, located in Arkansas and Oklahoma, are farm parcels which are operated by tenants on a cash rent basis. My wife and I have no management responsibilities in connection with either farming operation, and we receive only our shares of the annual cash rentals paid for such lands.

I believe that the financial interests I have described, therefore, present no actual or apparent conflict of interest in connection with the duties I expect to perform as

Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Food and Consumer Services, and as a Director of the Commodity Credit Corporation.

Sincerely,

JOHN W. BODE,
Assistant Secretary-Designate,
Food and Consumer Services.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

John W. Bode joined the U.S. Department of Agriculture on February 17, 1981, to become Deputy Assistant Secretary for Food and Consumer Services.

As Deputy Assistant Secretary, Mr. Bode is responsible for assisting in the development of national nutrition and consumer policies for the Department of Agriculture, as well as oversight of the Food and Nutrition Service, the Human Nutrition Information Service, and the Office of the Consumer Advisor.

Prior to this appointment, Mr. Bode served on the staff of the U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry from 1979 to 1981. During his tenure with the Committee, Mr. Bode had minority staff responsibilities for general USDA budget oversight and matters concerning the food assistance programs, as well as agriculture conservation and energy issues.

Mr. Bode previously served on the staff of then-Governor of Oklahoma, David L. Boren, and as a clerk to Oklahoma District Court Judge Raymond Naifeh.

Born in Oklahoma City, Mr. Bode was raised in Geary, Oklahoma, where he was involved with his family's grain elevator business and farming activities.

Mr. Bode received a Bachelor of Arts degree in political science from the University of Oklahoma and a juris doctorate degree from George Mason University School of Law.

Mr. Bode, his wife, Denise, and son live in Alexandria, Virginia.

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